

A Story of Degenerating Generations

It certainly is not clear that Proverbs 30:11 is written to our generation specifically, but it certainly has an application to us. The inclinations here mentioned are so obviously present in our time that it seems as if Solomon were looking down our street. It behooves us to take a serious look at them. Let's read:

"There is a generation that curseth their father, and doth not bless their mother. There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes and yet is not washed from their filthiness. There is a generation, O how lofty are their eyes! And their eyelids lifted up. There is a generation, whose teeth are as swords and their jaw teeth as knives, to devour the poor from off the earth, and the needy from among men."

There is a generation without respect for parental government. It seems clear that we are immersed in the aggrandizement of youth and because of that fact, most young people have no inclination to listen to their parents nor to accept any sort of parental guidance. The word of God speaks graphically to this youthful tendency. The total diminishing of morality is described in Romans the first chapter, and one of the signs of such moral decay is seen in verses 30-31, "Backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful." That gets awfully close to who and what we are. "Children obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor thy father and thy mother" (Ephesians 6:1-2). But there is a generation given to diminishing that command.

There is a generation that judges poorly what constitutes authority. Respect for authority has suffered a serious blow in our age, mainly on account of the rise and continued popularity of subjective reasoning. The fact of that is obvious in all areas—parental authority is demeaned, as we have seen; cheating is rampant in every level of education; the prisons are full of people who consider themselves no different than anybody else, except that they got caught; people cheat at all levels of government, ranging from little league baseball and soccer, to the major sports, to the Congress of the United States. Even religion has adopted a subjective appeal by affirming that "it doesn't make any difference what you believe, just as long as you're honest and sincere. "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God," we are told (I Peter 4:11); and "the powers that be are ordained of God" (Romans 13:1), and Peter speaks eloquently of those who "despise government" (II Peter 2:10). "Presumptuous are they," he says, and "self-willed, that they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities." There must be an authority outside of man or we're doomed to destruction.

There is a generation dedicated to their own accomplishments. Pride! The fuel for humanism. We live in a time where God is questioned, where creation is answered by evolution, and where the major themes in our Universities and Colleges are concerned with giving specious arguments as to both our existence and our destiny. It's sad. Proverbs 21:2 is an apt description of our present society. "Every man is right in his own eyes." We live in a time where excuses run rampant and reasons for failures are almost non-existent. "How lofty are their eyes! And how their eyelids are lifted up." Foolish pride likes nothing better than unrestrained independence, being free from restrictions, free to choose without fear of being wrong. And that describes our generation, don't you think? We best read the latter part of that passage: "But the Lord pondereth the hearts." We need to understand that our pride does not fool him. He knows.

There is a generation set upon greed. Their teeth are sharpened in order have more and more, even if it means devouring the poor. Nothing will get in the way of financial procurement—not family, not friends, not the Lord. "More! More! More!" That's cry today; and whatever it takes to make more, we seem willing to do it, even if it means sacrificing some of our principles. The philosophy has crept unawares into the church, too. Business excuses for a lack of involvement are common today. "I had to work. After all, I have to make a living for my family—God said so." And that's true, but greed is not part of His plan. And an insatiable appetite for more and more things is not, either. "Better is little with the fear of the Lord than great treasure with trouble therewith" (Proverbs 15:16). And I doubt there could be a greater or more imposing thought than having to meet the Almighty with nothing to defend yourself with but the almighty dollar.

Let's not be lulled into a state of indifference and lethargy. We cannot afford to be a part of the generations here described. There's just too much at stake. God will not be fooled, folks. He knows.

Dee Bowman